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HERALD PEDAGOGIKI. NAUKA I PRAKTYKA



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DEVELOPING AND IMPROVING TESTING SKILLS OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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The necessity to implement a large-scale reform of education in Ukraine requires the introduction of a new approach to the process of higher education institutions graduates training. The new integration policy of Ukraine into European economic, political and educational structures involves the training of competitive specialists capable of successfully implementing the process of cooperation between Ukraine and Europe and the rest of the world. One of the most important conditions for the successful accomplishment of this task is to teach young specialists the necessary skills for professional communication in a foreign language, conducting business negotiations, reading and understanding professional literature. Teaching such skills to students majoring in Economics is an essential component in achieving the main goal of teaching a foreign language in higher education institutions – mastering a foreign language as a means of professional communication.

Testing is an important part of the educational process in the modern system of higher education. First of all, it is important to analyze the formation of successful testing skills of future economists. It should be emphasized that the use of testing itself does not guarantee

an increase in educational efficiency of students who major in Economics. Effective use of testing in the process of learning a foreign language is possible under the following pedagogical conditions: the consistent and systematic introduction of testing for four types of speech activity: reading, writing, listening and speaking, taking into account the level of communicative competence of students, improvement of methodological training of teachers on testing, combination of different tests and traditional control.

Interest in testing is explained by the fact that it significantly increases the efficiency of the educational process and ultimately contributes to the complete independence of each student, therefore improving the individualization in the educational process. In addition, test control has many advantages over other types of control at lessons [1].

The main difference between a test and, for example, a traditional control work is that the test always involves measurement. The test result is more objective and independent of the possible subjectivism of the teacher than the assessment of traditional test work. Thus, the main distinguishing feature of the test is objectivity and providing quantitative information on the quality of assimilation. The

test makes it possible to test a considerable amount of the material studied in small portions and to diagnose the mastery of this material by the majority of students. Methodically organized testing will provide important feedback that ensures the management of the learning process, and will improve the effectiveness of learning a foreign language [3].

Based on the findings of scholars on the use of linguistic testing in teaching English, there are several basic requirements for testing: validity, reliability, differential ability, practicality, and cost-effectiveness. Compliance with these test requirements will make it possible to create a set of testing and comprehension tasks, the main purpose of which is to determine the real level of educational achievement of a certain group of students. In addition, the development of such a complex will allow the teacher to identify the types of test tasks, describe them and determine the method of evaluating student responses, saving time for their test, and to determine the structure of the test task.

New socio-economic conditions for the development of the Ukrainian state, its gradual movement into the world community, suggests higher requirements for institutions of higher education: to provide highly-qualified specialists who will be able to solve the complex problems of building a democratic state on the basis of the professional modern knowledge and competence. Proficiency in foreign languages has long become a prerequisite for the success of undergraduates in their professional activities. In this process the creation of a European Language Portfolio of each specialist and its filling at different stages of professional development is of primary importance [4].

The main task of learning a foreign language at a university is to develop students' foreign language competence. Naturally, during the course of study, students can achieve only a certain level of communication in curriculum-limited situations. In order to determine whether they are fluent in English, precise and objective control is needed to determine the level of academic achievement. The optimal form of control in this case should be test control [6].

Test control, or testing, involves different stages of planning, testing and processing and

interpretation of test results. The main purpose of educational test tasks according to Gaponova [2] is to promote the updating of the acquired knowledge and the formed skills and abilities for the purpose of foreign language communication. There are four types of test control in the learning process: current, thematic, boundary, final.

The main difference between a test and, for example, a traditional control work is that the test always involves measurement. Therefore, the test result is more objective and independent of the possible subjectivism of the teacher than the assessment of traditional test work, which is not always objective, since it is based on the impressions of the teacher, not always separated from his personal sympathy or dislike towards a student. Thus, the main distinguishing feature of the test is objectivity, which is guaranteed by measurement, whose function is to provide quantitative information on the quality of assimilation. At the same time, it allows to check a considerable volume of the studied material in small portions and to diagnose mastery of this material by the majority of students. One of the drawbacks of test control now is that the techniques developed are designed to test students' actual knowledge and do not take into account potential personality development opportunities; they are merely evaluative and not predictive in nature.

Yet, scientifically sound and methodologically sound testing will provide important feedback that guides the learning process and will enhance the effectiveness of foreign language learning [4].

Testing is an important part of the educational process in the modern system of higher education of foreign languages. It is noted in scientific literature that in addition to the traditional methods of knowledge control there is a test control. This type of control is an important part of linguistics that studies the methods of teaching foreign languages in higher education [3].

Language testing is widely used in language teaching in universities as a method of assessment. Tests allow you to monitor the progress of learning different kinds of speech activity; provide an opportunity to determine the level of the educational materials at different stages of learning.

Tests make it possible to fully and objectively assess students' knowledge, avoiding the teacher's subjectivity, cover all the main content of the discipline, create the opportunity to measure the starting level and the knowledge gained, to save the teacher's time. Testing increases motivation, personal interest and every student is included in the learning process, so daily learning becomes a necessity. Test control allows you to avoid deep gaps in knowledge and to improve and develop curriculum during the academic year.

Training on the principles of this program, according to Petraschuk [5], provides future professionals with the opportunity not only to successfully pass the final or state examination in the discipline "English for Professional Purpose", but also to prepare for international language and professional examinations in English, in particular, FCE, CPE, BEC, IELTS, TOEFL. Assessments are carried out at different stages throughout the course of study. It covers introductory, current, intermediate and final evaluations, together with the assessment of independent work and self-evaluation of students [1].

From the above the following conclusions can be made. Tests allow to measure different sides of such a complex methodological and linguistic phenomenon, as foreign language communicative competence. It is experimentally proved that the most accurate and adequate data, in comparison with other means of control, is testing. This opens up the prospects for the use of tests in cases

where the accuracy and reliability of the data obtained is highlighted. With the changing socio-economic conditions in Ukraine, one of the main goals of learning English as a foreign language is to provide an adequate level of communication skills and language proficiency that enables students majoring in Economics to adapt more successfully to their future professional activity.

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